

riFeA



Stay tuned...

ARCADE FIRE is currently being updated...

Filed under: [Random](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)
Tags: [Arcade Fire](#), [new website](#), [spike jonze](#)

calIV



No green carpet... Just a white building, above snowy white ground, below

stop tracer

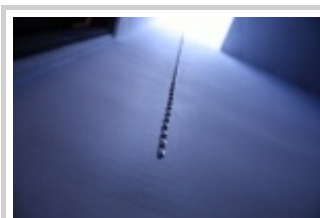
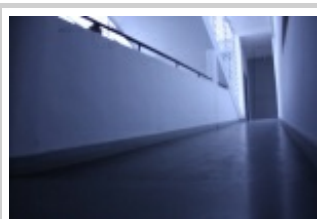
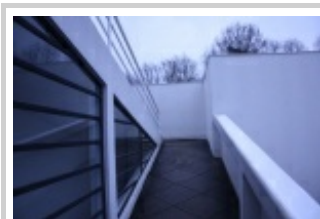
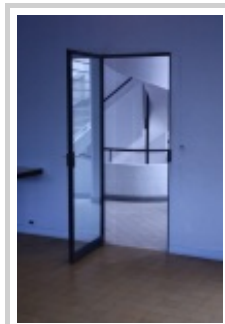
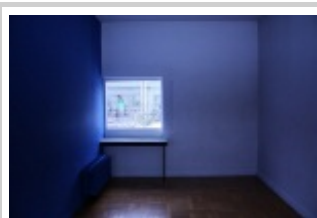
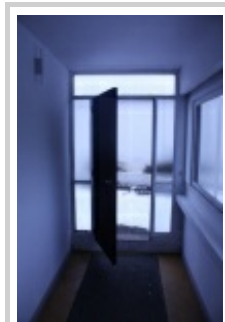
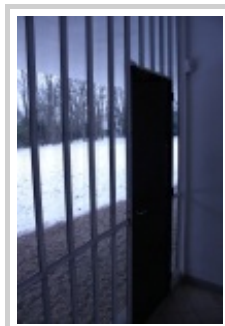
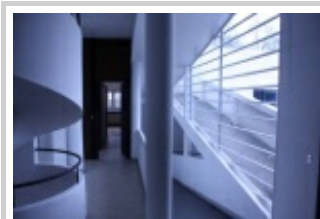
Arcade Fire is currently being updated.
Villa Savoye Photos from January
Gagarchitecture
Kunsthal Rotterdam Details
The Suburbs Redux I - An in depth track by track look at Arcade Fire's new release

renialcsid

MP3s and all other downloadable media for sampling only. Where possible support the artist/s behind the art.

leather white sky.

Some photos of the masterpiece from a trip I took on January 2010.



sevihcra

September 2010
July 2010
August 2008
June 2008
March 2008
February 2008
December 2007
November 2007
October 2007
September 2007
June 2007
May 2007
April 2007
March 2007

Filed under: [Architecture](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

Tags: [Le Corbusier](#), [Villa Savoye](#), [domino](#), [savoye](#), [corbusier](#), [cinq points](#), [5 points](#), [terrasse](#), [pilotis](#), [poissy](#)

stop pot

Femmes/Savoye
Kunsthal Rotterdam Details
Rubiks City

I lorgolb

Architecture takes itself seriously. Very seriously, infact. It's a professional field which, today, is draped in a veil of semi-academic esoteric statements – associated with a psuedo-scientific language which does anything but simplify communication between the architecture world and the wider public. Not to say there aren't many exceptions to the rule, but a walk round the [Bartlett](#) or [AA](#) summer shows is some proof of an entrenched way of talking about architecture in architecture schools and in architecture literature that is extremely difficult to engage with. In fact, architecture is hard to imagine as ever being popular in the same way as other cultural activities. Is there today a pop-architecture? The past is full of 60s, 70s and 80s examples, but today it is perhaps only [FAT](#), [Allsop](#), [Feix + Merlin](#) and a few other Venturi/[SITE](#)/Archigram influenced designers who spring to mind, if I purposely avoid such current meetings of pop and buildings such as [MTV Cribs](#).

AN Architecture
Architecture Foundation
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DISCLAIMER
Friends of the Earth
Future on Earth
Green as a Thistle
ICANHASCHEEZBURGER
Inhabitat
Reasic
The Torture Garden
Us Kids Know – An Arcade Fire
Fansite
WordPress.com
WordPress.org

October 2010

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« Sep						



I'd like to add [Koolhaas](#) to the list – a recent trip to the [Kunsthal](#) was full of humour and jokes – but all too often it's ironic or condescending. Whereas the visual, digital, film and sonic arts have embraced pop culture, architecture, for the most part, tries to avoid being seen as anything but a noble, serious activity.





So it was a breath of fresh air to stumble upon a project at the Bartlett show a few months back which was fun and serious. It was tongue in cheek but extremely precise and incredibly well thought through. More excitingly, it was a great comment on the work and the institution surrounding the display drawings on show. I can't remember the girl's name. I've searched and search to no avail – but the project was for a Church for a cult of Lady Gaga – reappropriating and transplanting a baroque church to the site of central London, complete with a wonderful dreamt up religio-mythology. It was a work of architecture which was cutting in its criticism of so much of the world's cultural behaviour – and yet, this is not to see it wasn't pop and it wasn't fun. The sharpness of the project's conceptual strategy made the other work filling the Slade seem hyperbolic, inflated and infatuated by a self-seriousness. Here was a project that could be enjoyed from both a (very) high and low(er) critical perspective. Pop meets architecture, rather than pop-architecture.



So what might happen if **OMA** and Gaga collaborated. It's far from an absurd idea – fashion clearly the connecting thread. But as well as just a collaboration in terms of an exchange of services (a set design for **Gaga**...A song/performance for OMA's latest project..see [here](#)) it could be something far more exciting. Architecture is floundering in my opinion as an art that can be appreciated and which has real cultural value. Modern architecture is STILL looked upon with fear and mistrust by a vast majority of people. Architects and architecture are an extremely fashionable area of interest and gain plenty of attention, but contemporary work is still an area of potential conflict. **Colchester's VAF** case in point. Both Gaga and **OMA** have an avant-garde approach to being overtly commercial – a truly stunning collaboration could be as powerful as the Church of Lady Gaga project – a functioning building which really can be understood in pop terms and can be embraced by pop culture. And there would be plenty of criticism I'm sure from the architecture world.

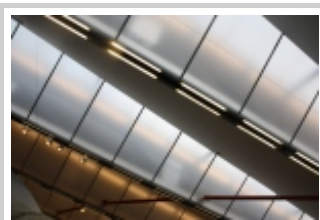
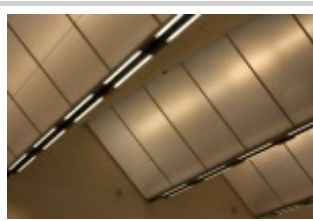
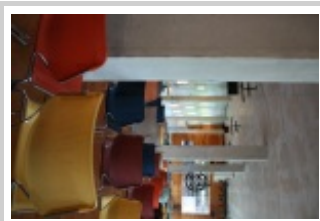
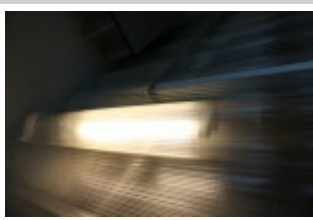
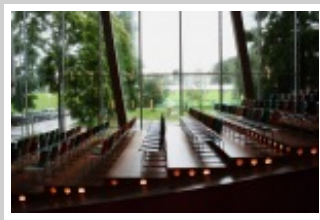
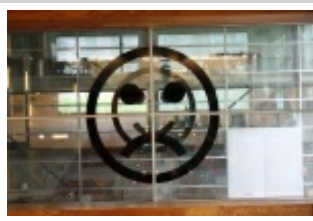
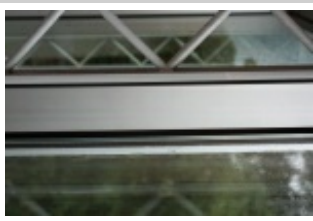
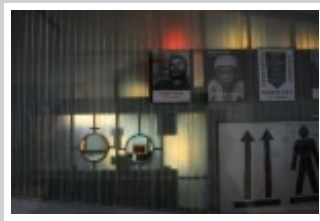
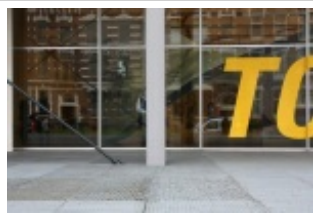
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Book



Some great details in Koolhaas' Kunsthall. Completely mindblowingly brilliant building and fantastic material juxtapositions. Humour, elegance and confidence.



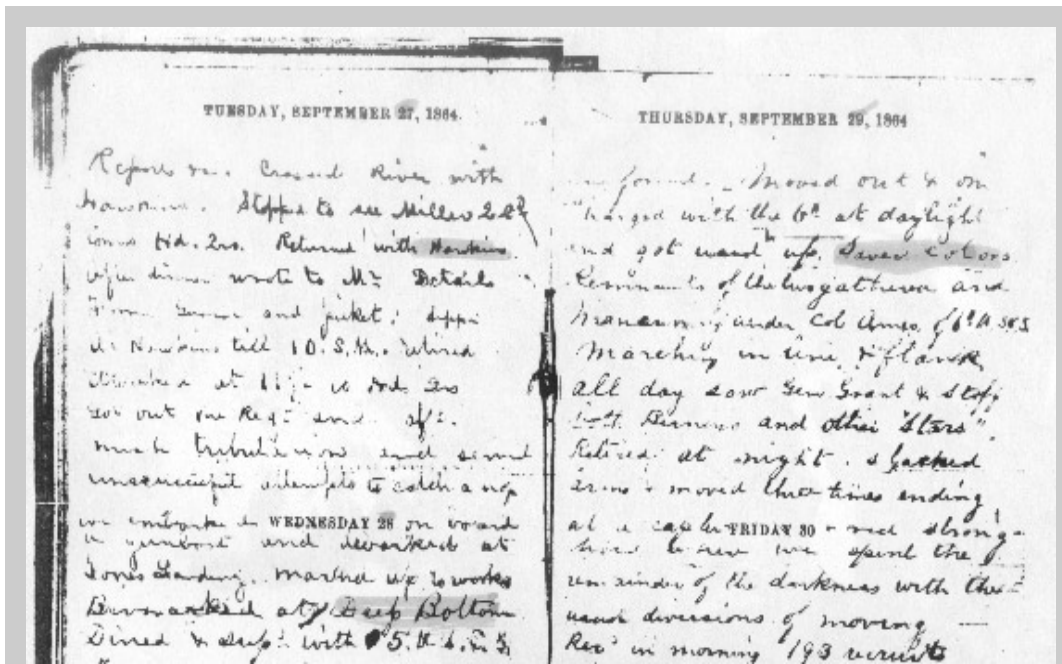
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Book
lat

The Suburbs sprawls across an hour's worth of shimmering sonic terrain – a familiar topography for the band. We sit in the passenger seat of Win Butler's car and watch a world of families, bored adolescents and ageing adults pass by. Arcade Fire's newest work is more fixed in the real than ever before. It's a more nuanced, detailed and observant work – the lights of a police car in bike reflectors, the glitches of a perfectly judged synth riff, the disco and motown influenced syncopation structuring many of the album's most upbeat moments.

Reviews of the album are everywhere. From the good, to the bad. So to avoid that whole discourse I'm going to take a look at a few tracks close up. The paintstrokes and the pixels that make up the beautiful whole.





I - Empty Room

The opening strings are a mix of signature Owen Pallet and *Funeral*-era Arcade Fire tracks – an energetic flutter which calls to mind *Heartland*. Like the boundless energy of a six year old let loose to play in the backyards of the neighborhood this insistent heartbeat powers through the track. The strings push on and on...an adrenalin surge... the smell of burning bicycle tires and sunny weekend air. Like *Heartland*'s uptempo string sections which mark journeys and adventures, Arcade Fire drag you along with all the pedal power they can muster, the suburban streets flying past in a blaze of youthful exuberance. This seems like an adventure. Whoever this kid is, they're taking over the neighborhood, the town...

The playfulness seems simple and sweet. But the song is far from a one trick pony. It's painfully short – like the innocence of youth. For above all, the song is a love song – whether that's love for a relative, friend or lover isn't clear.

Playful, childlike at the one time, there's a romantic *sehnsucht* that guides the song's lyrical progression. For all the soaring, boundless spirit of the opening, the lyrics reveal it all to be imagination – a multicoloured world conjured up out of the banality of the suburbs. A fantasy growing from loneliness and lost feeling.



Said your name in an empty room

Said your name in an empty

Something I would never do

I'm alone again.

Place in the song becomes something of a set of russian dolls. The mind, the empty room, the suburbs... and somewhere imagination and love exist.

Guitars wail, soaring and diving like conflicting emotions, the highs and lows of love and the memory of a special one. But in the suburbs these feelings are forced to fight for survival. The empty room (be it the relationship, the mind, the heart) is completely overwhelmed by sound – by emotion. It's an escape from suburbia through fantasy – the search for self and identity in a world of organised sterility. The single room, the space of the mind and of self-reflection, becomes more than a refuge – it's a safe place. An archive of feeling. The place of secrets.

When I'm by myself I can be myself

And my life if coming

But I don't know

when

Win and Regine sing side by side. Regine slightly higher in the mix, and taking the reigns at the end as she sings in french...the cryptic lines:

Toute ma vie, est avec toi.

Toute ma vie, est avec toi.

Moi J'attends, toi tu pars.



All my life, is with you. Me I wait. You, you leave.

It's the pain of growing up and moving from a home. It's the tearing apart of old connections, the effort to keep relationships alive. The pain and the loneliness of memory. The Empty Room seems to stand for our strongest relationship – which, once full, is now without one of the partners. It's the struggle to let go when someone else has and the pain and pleasure that

come with being left alone with our imaginations. How can you forget, when it is so easy to remember? And what is a memory but the unobtainable past ?- a living echo of a dead past. Like a black and white photograph in a technicolour world, the central lyric sticks in the head:

You were burning, now you're black and grey



Empty Room

More to follow...

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Tags: [analysis](#), [Arcade Fire](#), [empty room](#), [lyrics](#), [regine chassagne](#), [review](#), [suburbs](#), [win butler](#)

USA

OLY

A video I made last night for the first single and title track off Arcade Fire's upcoming masterpiece *The Suburbs*

Filed under: [Random](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

Tags: [1950s](#), [aerial](#), [Arcade Fire](#), [leak](#), [mp3](#), [old video](#), [ready to start](#), [skateboarding](#), [sprawl](#), [stock](#), [suburbs](#), [the suburbs](#), [video](#), [we used to wait](#)



The blog was dead.

It's nearly been two years. I don't know why I stopped blogging but the reasons to start again are simple.

Yesterday I saw **Arcade Fire** once again in the fantastic setting of the **Hackney Empire**, playing as well as I've ever heard them....I'm tempted to say better than ever before but my head's not thinking straight. I am buzzing, in a spin, swept away by a band that made me fall in love with music, and that reaffirmed to me last night that they are truly very special. It will take a long time to better the experience of having stood, clapped, danced, jumped, swayed, stretched out my arms and sung my lungs out, all in the front row two metres from **Win's** microphone, alive in the moment – wrapped up in glow of the best live band I've ever seen.

No support necessary. It was a parallel of those early shows back at **St John's Church** in Westminster – cold, grey January days when the band decided to test out their new **Neon Bible** songs to small London audiences. But as much as I couldn't stop reminiscing about those very special shows, yesterday it was a different band on stage – a parallax maybe. Same band, different perspective. In the warm, still summer evening they took to the stage with a confidence that underlined a more relaxed, more playful band – none of the nervous fervour of January 2007. I had staved off listening to bootlegs of the new songs. So besides the four officially released songs, the new material was just that.



Abandoned Californian Suburbs

Pained and angry, yet upbeat, opener **Ready To Start** sounded tight, mature, bristling with an restrained energy that oscillated between the dark and the light.. *“business men drinking my blood, like the kids in our art school said they would/ But I guess we’ll just begin again/ You said we’d still be friends.”* One of my favourite lyrical moments of the new songs comes just about halfway through the song, a simple little verse which poignantly captures a feeling I’m sure so many of us have felt as kids and teenagers, even as adults. *“Now you’re knocking at my door/ Saying please come out with us tonight/ But I’d rather be alone/ Than pretend I feel alright.”* That’s when **Win Butler** is so strong as a lyricist – it’s the intimate reflections on growing up that stick in the mind – not the grand, thematic questionings of **Neon Bible**. As the song then swells up with an almost violent kick it’s clear that whilst **Funeral** was concerned with keeping within the imaginative world of the childhood psyche, **The Suburbs’** subtler, more sophisticated approach balances the past with the present – the adult mind that holds such memories of growing up is there – watching, waiting and breathing just below the surface.

Arcade Fire – Ready to Start by MiscMusic



David Lynch's Blue Velvet

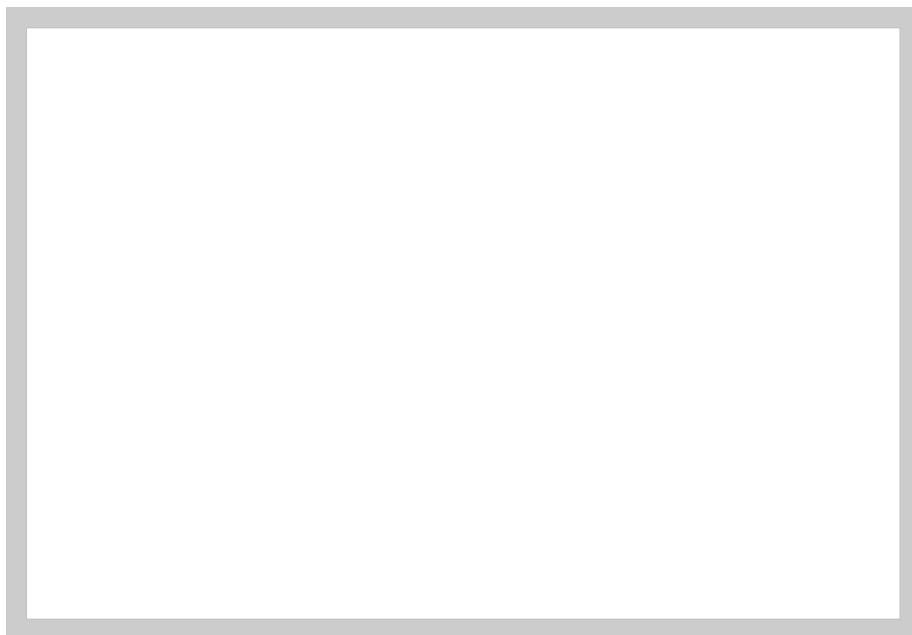
Then into **Modern Man** - **Richard Reed Parry** playing a beautiful, beautiful looking and sounding guitar. Not as immediately enamouring as Ready To Start, but a great beat with a soul/motowny lilt, **Regine** dancing away between the synths, **Sarah** and **Marika** moving to the playful, stop start rhythm and **Win** singing a oh-so **Arcade Fire**-y monologue. Next, **Laika** made sure the crowd were under the spell of the band - the first song I ever fell in love with. A song which seems as if it had been with me forever, a tune I'm sure I hummed as a five year old - and which, on hearing it for the first time, felt like it had been written just for me.

No Cars Go and **Haiti** followed. The string of three classic songs a reminder of just how incredible the band's early work is. They did seem to establish a divide between the old and new, but the band played both with such conviction and passion and care that it's clear come the next time I see them (hopefully) such a division is unlikely to exist.

Empty Room has all the promise of a great great song, but the vocals were too low - **Regine** and **Win** drowned out by the shimmering noise of four guitars and a drum kit. Something really beautiful could be sensed, but it was too far back in the sound to see and hear its shape and form. Similarly **Rococo** suffered a bit from low vocals and excessively quiet strings, but it's rolling, mechanical wind up was spine tingling - the release joyously rebellious, brash and full. Harpsichord like horror movie keyboard chords swelled into a chorus as if an army of awoken spirits had declared war on auto-tune. Like **Wake Up, Keep the Car Running** and so many other songs, the vocal chorus, the unashamedly raw sound of a band and an audience singing pure sound (ohhh, ahhs, laasss, all beyond words, all universal) swept up from the stage to the starry ceiling of the theatre.

The Suburbs/Suburban War combo slowed the pace. The lazy, summery roll of the title track translating better live than some earlier shows suggested. But still a rare weak point in the night; however, on the plus side it offered a moment to admire the **Spike Jonze** visuals on the billboard style tv screen above the stage. There is something so delicate and precise about the record version that didn't come across live. It'll be exciting to see how it ends up as a

live song vs a album song, in the way that **Haiti** live and on record are two different creatures. **Suburban War** sounded good, but not especially memorable, despite a brilliant shift in mood towards the end of the song.



Intervention has never been a favourite of mine, but the crowd loved it – the bombast and hyperbolic lyrics just about managing to fill the venue.

We Used to Wait has been my highlight from the singles released so far, and live it was equally fascinating. It really seems to mark an exciting change in direction. Again, motown influences can be heard, but disco beats too, a dark dance-y pulse drifting through the chorus in a way that still retains a rock feel. I doubt it'll be the song I listen to the most off the album, but it seems like an important step for the band. Electronic elements are incorporated in a way which stays true to the instrumental pedantry we are so used to from the band. It's a song which really underlines the older/younger dual viewpoint I mentioned earlier on and talks of a type of growing up which isn't just from childhood to adulthood, but from early adulthood into a person's 30s. It also seems to reflect that band and the conflicts they face as artists with huge critical as well as growing commercial success. *"Now our lives are changing fast/Now our lives are changing fast/Hope that something pure can last/Hope that something pure can last"*

And so, as the gig heads toward its end **Powellion** and new song **Month of May** keep the crowd on dancing for 13 or so minutes. The first two songs as fun, passionate and perfect as ever and **Month of May** sure to become a live staple – something far greater live than on record – barely contained energy pushing the song towards a precipitous position – chaotic and frenetic and brilliant.

And then the encore.

I don't think I'll even bother describing it. It was just perfect. The crowd were smiling, the band were smiling. Everyone screaming their hearts out.

Ready To Start
Modern Man
Laika

No Cars Go
Haiti
Empty Room
Rococo
Suburbs
Suburban War
Intervention
We Used To Wait
Power Out -> Rebellion
Month of May

....

Crown of Love
Tunnels
KTCR
Wake Up

We Used To Wait by Arcade Fire

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Once again PingMag is writing about some very interesting stuff:

<http://pingmag.jp/2008/08/25/audium-see-with-your-ears/>

Excerpt:

“ **And when composing, how do you feel mixing *synthetic* with *human* sounds?**

I really don't hear the difference anymore. I'm just interested in a sound and if it happens to be produced electronically or maybe played by an acoustic instrument, it's just all one. *It's how it shapes that matters.* You could have a door slam, it might be just a door slamming and mean nothing more than that. On the other hand, if it slams at the right moment at the right time, it can be very profound if the setting is right and that's how I feel about all sounds. Depending on how a sound emerges *it can be a jewel or nothing.*

PLUS!<http://pingmag.jp/2008/07/07/crossbreeding-shipbuilding-with-architecture/>

AAHAH...I love Klein Dytham:



Filed under: [Architecture](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

or rjs

8:2

□





Fantastic gig the other night (24th june). Great set list, happy Jonsi, brilliant audience, nice stage stuff, amazing acoustics... standing in the front row, 2/3 metres from jonsi and kjartan...hearing the vocals half through the amps, half directly through the air...it was brilliant. stand outs have to be Gobbledigook for being just FUN FUN FUN, and then Hafsol and Pop.. for sheer epic brilliance. However, Fljotavik is my favourite from the new album and hearing it was just beautiful.... understated, perfect and so emotional. Inni mer syngur vitletsinkur was the other new song to really shine. The new style of Med Sud works really well live, the more upbeat songs bounce really well off the sadder material. We were treated to three bows, two encores...and the final song All Alright was just haunting, heartbreaking.





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Filed under: [Music Reviews](#) | [Leave a Comment](#)

Tags: [central hall](#), [june 2008](#), [sigur ros](#), [westminster](#)



So I while back I [posted](#) about moving, rotating buildings and urban environments, which was really interesting. A little while after I came across

some more posts about some potential projects and today I found out [Dynamic Architecture](#) has designed an actual rotating tower, together with some of the environmental, power generation, and user friendly benefits I suggested might be offered by this type of design.



So, [Inhabitat](#) has a nice post about the project and some great pics. Unsurprisingly Dubai is the base for the first of these towers, construction is to begin soon. And whilst I am against a lot of what Dubai is about – the superficiality, the environmental negligence, ostentatious luxury, worker exploitation and so on – it is an incredible opportunity to test out experimental, unique designs and ideas.

I really feel that this could be the start of something really exciting. This building is self sufficient too, in terms of energy requirements! Sure it's in Dubai, but with the exponential improvement of voltaic cell efficiency it surely won't be long before more innovative solar techniques are applied to everyday builds. There's so much further to go before the Rubiks City I imagine could become reality, but I feel like this is a massive step forward and can't wait to see the results. It's the natural evolution of the merry -go-round via the [Dymaxion House](#).



The next step might be an integration of flexible transport systems into city – lane alteration, for example for rush hour seeing 4 lanes of a 6 lane motorway allocated to the influx or exodus of workers in morning and evening respectively, retractable drainage systems and pedestrian crossings, roads turning to walkways and so on.

However, Dubai is also the land of the architectural gimmick. ([Take your pic...](#))

World largest, biggest, tallest, shiniest...world's first, world's only, world's most expensive.....And this all means there's a threat of genuinely interesting ideas like this being cast in the mould of the Palm islands – pretty pointless in reality, all show and no tell. I guess we'll see in the next few years if this building is a success, if it works. The architects/developers have gone for a big first development – it's Dubai after all.

I've got a feeling though that working out new ideas on a smaller scale might be more useful. 7 smaller projects, but still larger than the several [rotating homes](#) already built, each completed in a fraction of the time of the Rotating Tower (Despite it's relatively fast construction time) could offer 7 experimental approaches and then those outcomes could be factored into a really well thought out, more ideologically and technically sound building.

Anyway, i'm really excited just to see this being built. This is experimentation ...and I love it!

Edit:

Funnily enough there is a new car advert out, which is all about adjustable features/customization.

What is it about car adverts and rubiks like city environments?

 Filed under: [Architecture](#) |  [Leave a Comment](#)
Tags: [dubai](#), [dynamic architecture](#), [rotating tower](#)

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Villa Savoye we used to
wait

